

Committee on Resources

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Proposed Testimony, Sgt. Jeremy House

August 28, 2006

Sgt. House is a 14 year veteran of the Billings Police Department. He has extensive experience in patrol and investigative operations with an emphasis on proactive drug investigation and enforcement, having initiated and worked to successful conclusion hundreds of drug related contacts. He currently supervises the joint City of Billings/County of Yellowstone Special Investigations Unit (CCSIU) comprised of investigators from the Billings Police Department, Yellowstone County Sheriff's Office, and Laurel Police Department. As part of that function, he supervises the Big Sky FBI Safe Streets Task Force which is geared towards the long term investigation of street gang related criminal activity. In addition, Sgt. House supervises the Eastern Montana HIDTA Task Force (utilizing team members from CCSIU, ATF, DEA, ICE, and MT Dept. of Corrections) which focuses on criminal activity related to the trafficking of dangerous drugs with specific emphasis on methamphetamine. Finally, under House's direction CCSIU partners with the US Marshal's Violent Fugitive Apprehension Task Force. Sgt. House has over one thousand hours of specialized law enforcement training, with approximately 300 specific to drug investigations.

The experience of CCSIU related investigations has shown that a large number of violent and drug related criminal participants have contacts and/or sources of supply that extend well beyond local boundaries. In fact, a significant number of high level investigations have been shown to cross international boundaries particularly into Canada and Mexico. CCSIU investigators have routinely partnered with agencies throughout the United States while engaged in multi-jurisdictional investigations that often have originating sources of supply in the countries mentioned. In numerous instances, those means of supply have been facilitated by the use of undocumented or illegal alien persons.

During the past several years, members of the Eastern Montana HIDTA have had and are currently involved in on-going cases where large amounts of methamphetamine and ecstasy have been seized in Montana. During the course of the investigations and subsequent prosecutions of involved participants it has been learned that sources of supply routinely originate in both Canada and Mexico. It has also been determined that the methods of transportation often utilized illegal aliens.

Local investigations continue to document cases whereby illegal aliens currently residing in the eastern Montana area are actively engaged in the trafficking and distribution of controlled substances. In fact, in many cases those individuals have established community and family ties which allow the ease of transition for additional group members to infiltrate the community.

The eastern Montana area encompasses the Crow and Northern Cheyenne Indian Reservations. Drug activity in both reservations is rampant, and is generally tied directly to participants identified in other investigations as described previously.